

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDY**

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The faculty of FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOM) believes that study experiences abroad can be valuable to the professional growth of medical students and other healthcare professionals. Students should understand that participating in international experiences may include some degree of risk to themselves and others. Students should also remember that the professional standards that apply to them at home, equally apply to them when they study abroad.

In the interest of student and patient safety and in keeping with the medical school's commitment to providing its students a quality educational experience, the following standards have been established for FIU medical students who pursue international study:

1. The proposed experience must be reviewed and approved by HWCOM.
2. A performance evaluation and a student evaluation of the learning experience by the student must be submitted at the end of the experience.
3. Prior to approving an experience, HWCOM will assess the potential risks to health and safety. HWCOM reserves the right to deny the experience if it is felt the risk to health or safety outweighs the benefit of the experience.
4. The student in the clinical learning setting must be appropriately supervised at all times.
5. The level of responsibility delegated to the student must be appropriate to the student's level of training.
6. The activities undertaken by the student must be within the scope of practice of the supervising health professional.

### ***TYPES OF EXPERIENCE***

Students may pursue several types of international experiences:

1. **For-credit experience (academic, clinical, research) with FIU or an FIU-affiliated organization.**  
FIU HWCOM has developed affiliations with academic, clinical and research partners all over the world. Students who are interested in pursuing study abroad experiences are encouraged to consult the International Programs Coordinator for Student Affairs for guidance and to review available opportunities.
2. **For-credit experience (academic, clinical, research) not affiliated with FIU.**  
Students should understand that crafting a study abroad experience that meets HWCOM and LCME standards is difficult and time-consuming. At the present time consideration will only be given for international programs offered by other LCME-accredited medical schools, official courses contained in the course catalog of well-known non-U.S. medical schools and universities, GHLO opportunities, or programs sponsored by trusted U.S. or international organizations (e.g. International Red Cross).

### **3. Non-credit experience (academic, clinical, research, medical mission, etc.)**

- a. Sponsored by FIU or an FIU-affiliated organization. Students are encouraged to participate in non-credit opportunities developed by FIU or its affiliate partners.
- b. Sponsored by a non-FIU affiliated organization. Requests to participate in programs sponsored by non-FIU organizations will be carefully vetted by the Office of Student Affairs and others as deemed appropriate. Approval to participate in such experiences is not guaranteed. Preference is given for programs sponsored by other LCME-accredited medical schools, well-known non-U.S. medical schools and universities, or trusted U.S. or international organizations.

#### ***APPROVAL PROCESS***

All actively enrolled HWCOM medical students planning experiences abroad (including for-credit and non-credit clinical, academic, and research experiences, as well as medical mission trips) must notify the Office of Student Affairs and comply with the following approval process.

#### **1. Application**

Complete the FIU HWCOM International Study Application Form and submit it to the International Programs Coordinator for Student Affairs. The form must be completed in its entirety and include the following information:

- a. Inclusive dates of experience.
- b. Name and contact information of the host agency or institution.
- c. Name(s) of the individual(s) who will be supervising the student.
- d. Description of the responsibilities to be assumed by the student during the experience.
- e. Emergency contact information.
- f. **For-credit experiences only:** Name of the individual who will be submitting an HWCOM Grade and Evaluation Form, including a grade of Pass or Fail and a narrative evaluation of the student's performance.
- g. Please note that the application must be submitted a minimum of 3-6 months in advance for non-credit experience and 9-12 months in advance for-credit experience. Reach out to the Office of Student Affairs, Office of Academic Affairs, and/or Office of Medical Education for further guidelines regarding time restrictions and timelines.

#### **2. Supportive Documents**

The following supportive documents must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs with the application:

- a. Letter from the host institution or agency stating a formal commitment to supervise and be responsible for the student while in the region.
  - i. The letter must be written on the official stationary of the host institution or agency and signed by an official institutional representative. It may be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs by mail, fax or e-mail. The letter must include the following information:
    1. Student's name
    2. Title of experience / clerkship
    3. Name of host institution / agency
    4. Location(s) of the experience (address, city, state, country)
    5. Inclusive dates of experience (start and end dates)
    6. Name of supervisor

7. Affirmation of the following:
  - a. The institution agrees to be responsible for the student during the course of his/her clinical training
  - b. The student's clinical activities will be appropriately supervised at all times.
  - c. The level of responsibility delegated to the student will be appropriate for a fourth year medical student.
  - d. The activities undertaken by the student will be within the scope of practice of those supervising his training.
  - e. At the conclusion of the experience the institution agrees to submit a completed and signed FIU evaluation form of the student's performance, including a grade of pass or fail.
- b. Documentation of recognized health and political hazards in the foreign country from the following information sources:
  - i. U.S. State Department - <http://travel.state.gov/>
  - ii. Centers for Disease Control – <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>
  - iii. World Health Organization – <http://www.who.int/ith/en/index.html>

### 3. Preliminary Review

The application and supportive documents will be reviewed by the International Programs Coordinator for Student Affairs and others (as deemed appropriate) to ensure that the experience complies with standards established by HWCOP and the LCME (benefit of experience outweighs risk to health and safety, appropriate supervision, appropriate level of responsibility delegated to the student, and activities within the scope of practice of the supervising health professional). Students will be notified in writing if their application meets preliminary approval or if it is rejected.

### 4. For-Credit Experiences

If credit is sought, the application will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Clinical Medical Education, the Director for Research and/or their designees. Students will be informed in writing if the experience meets criteria to be awarded credits.

### 5. If preliminary approval is granted, the student must submit additional documents to the Office of Student Affairs and register with the FIU Study Abroad Office.

- a. Submit the following to the Office of Student Affairs:
  - i. Proof of immunizations consistent with CDC recommendations for a healthcare worker traveling to the area of study.
  - ii. A signed *Release and Assumption of Risk Agreement*. If student is a minor, his/her legal guardian must sign the *Release*.
  - iii. Description of cultural preparation activity. Preferably this should be provided by the host institution or agency. Students can also consult with the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of International Student Programs, and/or the FIU Study Abroad Office for such opportunities. This requirement may be waived by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs if deemed appropriate.
- b. Submit the following to the FIU Study Abroad Office:
  - i. Online application at:  
<https://abroad.fiu.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgram&ProgramID=10123>
  - ii. Copy of passport

- iii. Payment for FIU negotiated health insurance plan with evacuation and repatriation coverage. The Study Abroad Office will register the student upon receipt of payment and provide an insurance card before the student departs.

## 6. Final Approval

Once all documents have been submitted, final approval must be provided as follows:

- a. **For-credit experiences:** To qualify for credits, final approval must be provided by the Executive Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs or their designees.
- b. **Non-credit experiences:** For all non-credit experiences, final approval must be provided by the Executive Associate Dean for Student Affairs or designee.

Students will receive written notification of final approval or denial of the experience.

## 7. Post-experience

To be awarded credit, students are required to submit to the Office of Student Affairs a post-experience evaluation form at the conclusion of their experience abroad. The Office of Student Affairs must also receive a completed and signed grade and evaluation form from the supervisor of their experience. Note: Supervising physician at institution will complete an evaluation form for each student participant during fourth year rotation.